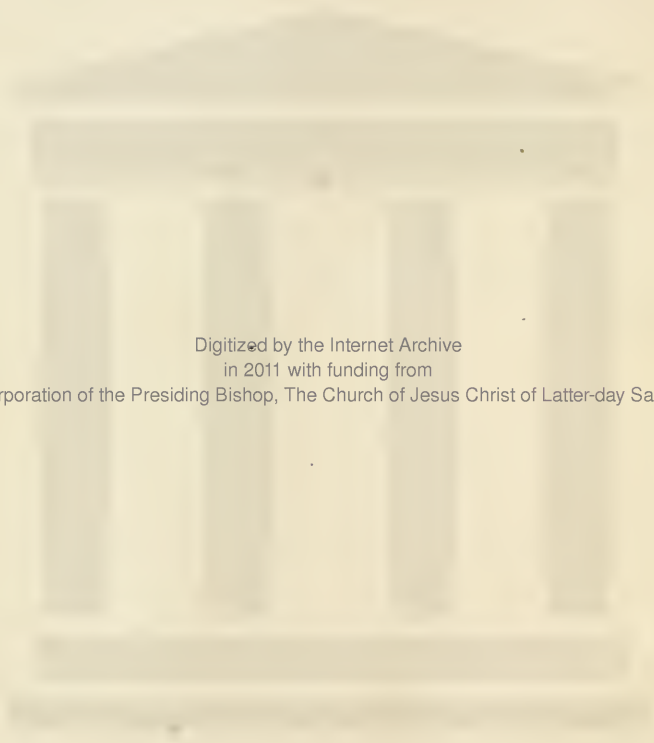








~~Frank Weston~~



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Patriarchal Order,

OR

PLURALITY OF WIVES!

BY ELDER ORSON SPENCER, A.B.,

CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DESERET, UTAH TERRITORY, U.S.A., AND PRESIDENT
OF THE PRUSSIAN MISSION OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS.

Being his Fifteenth Letter in Correspondence with the Rev. William Crowel, A.M., Editor of the "Western Watchman," St. Louis, U.S.A., (late Editor of the "Christian Watchman," Boston, Massachusetts.)

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

At our last interview in November last, you desired a more full and entire expression of my views, concerning the tenets of a people whose notoriety is fast spreading among the nations of the earth, and commanding their intense consideration. I am fully aware, that if my views as to the doctrine of Patriarchal Order should fortunately obtain any acceptance with yourself, or an enlightened public, that acceptance must be secured by the irresistible force of truth and divine revelation. The usage of all Christian nations, and the most inveterate prejudice, will rear their most potent bulwarks against it. But I entertain this encouragement, however, that the spirit of the age justifies investigation into every subject that proposes to ameliorate the condition of the human family, whether it regards domestic compact or political or strictly religious organization. Domestic compact is the first order of all social organization, and must even antecede all civil government, and contribute much to the genius and character of the same. It is the basis, upon which every superstructure of society must be reared. The laws regulating marriage and divorce, and the license of sexual intercourse, without any prescribed order of marriage at all, range in great variety and discrepancy among different Christian nations. And the laws of Christendom differ widely from other three-fourths of the whole family of man, and also differ indisputably from the laws of the Old and New Testament. If the intercourse of the sexes is not regulated in wisdom and purity, the result will be that every consequent branch and order of society will be vitiated thereby. First make the tree good, and the fruit will be also good. A pure fountain will not send forth bitter streams. A fig tree will not bear thistles.

When parentage is established after a wholesome and righteous order, the consequence will be felt in every social and civil organization whatever, both in this world and beyond the limits of this world. It is not in the power of any government, or of any religious community, or reform association, to create good order and great prosperity, with a corrupt Patriarchal order at the foundation. What that pure and perfect Patriarchal order is, upon which the welfare of society so much depends, it will be my object to show in this letter. Here let me say, that the family order which God established with Abraham and the Patriarchs, was the order observed among celestial beings, in the celestial world. And this family order is not only one at which God sits as the Head, and first pattern in the series of matrimonial examples; but it is of perpetual duration, both in and beyond this world. It is utterly absurd to suppose the anomaly of such an existence as a father without a mother. Every thing in the analogy of nature forbids such an idea. The analogy of birds, fish, quadrupeds,

creeping things, and vegetables, forbids it. Have not we all, one Father? We are all His offspring. A large family to be ascribed to one father! But where is the Scripture that ascribes the origin of all diverse sons to one and the same mother? When God sets up any portion of his kingdom upon the earth, it is patterned after his own order in the Heavens. When he gives to men a pattern of family organization on the earth, that pattern will be just like his own family organization in the heavens. The family of Abraham was a transcript of a celestial pattern. The likeness was drawn by a master artist, who was perfectly familiar with the celestial pattern. Abraham's family was a fresh organization, designed to effect the perpetuity and increase of God, in an endless succession of families. And every family which God institutes upon the earth, is fashioned like his own original family, in the heavens. A heavenly family was a perfect family, both as to the ordinance by which it was united, and as to the laws which rewarded or punished the observer or violator of the same. Abraham's family was required to be equally perfect. God testified of Abraham, that he walked before him in perfection, and also that his family was organized on correct principles; his children and household, including his wives and servants, were conducted just according to the mind of God. This family order of Abraham was spread out before God, and met with his entire and full approbation. And why did God approve of it? Because it is the only order practised in the celestial heavens, and the only peaceful, united, and prosperous order that will endure, while man-invented orders and devices will utterly deceive and perish with the using. Now God testified that Abraham's conduct, with his wives and children, and servants, and all included in his household, was perfectly right and proper, and He knew that he would continue to practice righteousness. Consequently, Abraham was perfectly virtuous and pure, and so were his wives. And all his marriages were perfectly honourable, whatever number of wives he might have, and his bed was never defiled; nor were his children illegitimate, as God did not forbid him to marry, as many human governments forbid men to do. Thousands of innocent, unoffending children are yearly born under the burthen of infamous illegitimacy, while the offending parents instead of being banished for such an offence, are banished, if they seek to avoid the offence by marrying the objects of their love, and thereby ensure honourable sustenance upon their offspring. How many virtuous females would infinitely prefer to unite their destinies to one and the same honourable, virtuous, and high-minded man, than to separate their destinies each to an inferior, unvirtuous, and vicious man. The consequence of the latter connexion in vitiating their offspring, is too great to be told or fathomed by a finite mind; it takes hold upon worlds to come.

Shall such virtuous and innocent females, though they may be poor and low in the scale of fortune's partial smiles—shall they be denied the right to choose the objects of their love? Shall they be refused by the stern threats of law, to marry whom their hearts desire? Must they, through the operation of hideously contracted laws, be virtually doomed to resort to infamous prostitution, entailing disease, infamy, and death upon themselves and their offspring, or to marry an inferior grade of corrupt, vicious men, debauchees, gluttons, drunkards, and idlers, or remain in perpetual celibacy and frustrate the designs of their creation, and violate the first and foremost command of God, to multiply and replenish the earth? Who does not know that God is ashamed of such narrow, contracted laws, and of their advocates who are so grossly ignorant of the first great principles of legislation. Sir, if time would permit, I would clearly demonstrate, that a prohibition to marry should be predicated upon transgression and the commission of crime. The crimes of Saul and David worked a forfeiture of their title to their wives, and transferred them into the hands of more virtuous and loyal men. Progression in knowledge and increase in dominion, power, and happiness, are inseparably connected with the multiplication of the human family. But the all-wise God checks the advancement of transgressors towards dominion, power, and happiness, by withholding the antecedent means. He prevents the multiplication of fallen Angels, while he commands the obedient to multiply, and inasmuch as they are called to the heart-rending scene of forsaking their wives for the Gospel's sake, they have the assurance of being repaid an hundred fold. Thus it appears that God blesses good men by multiplying and increasing them, and punishes evil doers, by blotting out their names, and cutting off from the earth their posterity.

The history of the Patriarchs is a series of blessings of this sort. The blessings bestowed upon their numerous wives, are of the same kind also. And no tale of grief or occasion for lamentation, was more conspicuous in the history of the Patriarchs, or of their wives, than to be written childless and without posterity on the earth. God always attached an honourable distinction to males and females who engaged in the sacred system of plurality according to the conditions he laid down for them to observe.

Only a cursory reading of the history of the Patriarchs will illustrate the honourable attitude in which God regarded them.

Not only was Abraham honourable, virtuous, and pure in taking to himself two wives, but Sarah and Hagar were also honourable, virtuous, and pure in consenting to be made the wives of one and the same man. How so, say you? Why, because the Almighty distinctly certified and caused the same to be made a matter of record that they and their lord and husband, Abraham, were honourable in so doing. Do you marvel that I make this assertion in proof of plurality? Marvel not.

The Almighty, dear sir, actually visited this husband of two wives, and went into a discussion of his family and domestic concerns; concerns by the way, more important to the progress of His kingdom and to the everlasting happiness of the human family, than many have seriously thought of. What did he say about his family matters? Did he say, Abraham; beware of a carnal mind! beware of the lust for woman! Did he say the first word of the kind? No, sir; I repeat it, no, sir; he said no such thing. Well, tell us plainly what he did say? Why, read it for yourself upon your knees, if your heart is not otherwise humble enough to receive this doctrine. He virtually said this to Abraham,—Abraham, I find no fault with your taking two wives, but on the other hand, I bless you for it, and I bless you in doing it, and I bless them in becoming your wives, above all other women upon the earth. I bless you and your wife Sarah with the strength and joy of your youth; you shall have a son. You shall not only have a son, but you shall have even nations of sons and daughters. Your wife Hagar also shall be greatly blessed among women for what she has done. Kings and potentates, and even nations shall be among her offspring. Mine angel shall wait upon her, and instruct and comfort her, and see her wants supplied. And Sarah, seeing she had faith while herself was barren, to give Hagar to you to wife, shall herself even yet have a son, notwithstanding her age. And your posterity shall be as the dust of the earth for number and multitude, and as the sands upon the sea-shore.

Though Abraham had many wives and concubines, yet we have no knowledge that any reproof was ever administered to him from God; but we have a certain assurance that he was a favourite child and heir of God, and with his sons was safely lodged in the Kingdom of God.

I will next call your attention to the marriage practice of Jacob, one of the most illustrious Prophets, and a grandson of Abraham. Jacob had several wives, and by them were born unto him the Twelve Patriarchs, after whom all the Tribes of Israel were named. Now, sir, one of these wives was honoured with being the lineal mother of Jesus Christ, according to the flesh. What! Jesus Christ descended from a man who advocated the doctrine of a plurality of wives, and actually had many wives! Why he was as bad as Mahomet! I wonder, says one, that God ever kept a record of such a lineage, seeing it favors the doctrine of a plurality of wives. Why, sir, this was one object of keeping the record of Christ's lineage, that it might sustain this very doctrine. Another object was, that the promised seed might be accurately traced out. All the time that Jacob was labouring with Laban, for the purpose of getting his daughters for his wives, God was with Jacob, upholding him and enriching him by his supernatural arm, in order that he might have ample means to support his many wives and their numerous children, whereby he might become a king over a numerous and mighty nation, springing from his own loins. Did the Lord ever frown upon him for living with his several wives? No, never. On the contrary, hosts of angels went out to meet him, and they stood by him and blessed him when he was in danger from his brother Esau.

Furthermore, in support of the good conduct of these men who taught and practised upon the doctrine of a plurality of wives, the Lord God has said, that it shall be a memorial to all generations, that he is the Lord God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. Now, sir, let it be distinctly understood that this me-

morial is for *this* generation in common with *all* other generations. What is the MEMORIAL, say you, that this generation is to call to mind, and by no means suffer to slip out of their mind at any time? Why, sir, it is, the self-same founders and corner-stones of the whole house of Israel, even the whole Israel of God, were pluralists in the fullest sense of the word. And God wants this generation to remember it and not forget it; and not only should this generation remember it, but all generations should remember it; for it is God's memorial, and so revealed in His most holy word, which is able to make wise unto salvation.

Well, I declare, says one, I did not know but this system of polygamy was the practice of some dark age which God rather winked at through their ignorance and in consequence of their being sprung from heathenish parents. But now it does seem that God really delighted in these polygamists and their practices, and wanted all generations to know it, and to know it distinctly, and never forget it. Well, says one, if this is the case, then surely the veil has been over my eyes in reading the Scripture; for I never discovered before, that polygamy was a blessing and duty binding upon God's people in *all* generations. I always thought that it was confined to the Patriarchal age until now. Now, it seems to be extended to this and all generations. I see now, indeed, that Paul says that all those who are of the faith of Abraham are heirs of the same promises and of the same blessings.

In looking into the law of Moses, I perceive that Moses enacted that, where a man had two wives, and each of the wives had sons, the birthright should appertain to the son who should be born *first*, whether the mother of that son was first in the date of marriage or not.

Now let us go a little further, and look into the moral character of Elkanah and his two wives. Was Elkanah, the father of Samuel the prophet, a good man? Were Elkanah's wives good women, that gave themselves in perpetual wedlock to one and the same man, and had many children by him? Now, Hannah, one of these wives, was barren, and had no children; yet Hannah was a firm believer, and she knew the Scriptures; and she knew that children were the heritage of the Lord, and the thought of being deprived of that heritage grieved her soul and made her spirit sorrowful continually before the Lord. She knew that her barrenness would be ascribed by her sisters to some displeasure which the Lord entertained towards her; because that one of the greatest blessings which the Lord could confer upon a woman, would consist in making her a mother of nations, like Sarah of old; therefore she gave the Lord no rest till she obtained the promise made to Abraham and Sarah, and bore Samuel, and lent him to the Lord, according to her promise and covenant, all the days of his life. Her faith and her conduct so pleased the Lord, that he blessed her more abundantly than she at first dared to ask. He gave her three more sons and two daughters.

Who now, after reading this history, can even doubt for a moment that Elkanah's wife ranked with holy women, and Elkanah, the husband of two wives ranked with holy men. And God not only authorized the marriage of one man to several women, but also blessed all concerned in it, even with the greatest blessings, as we shall soon discover.

Well, says one, did God really give some of the greatest and best of men, many wives, because he was pleased with that domestic order and plan for holy and righteous purposes, whereby the righteous would out-number the wicked and surpass them in wisdom, might, happiness, and dominion? Or did he barely suffer it as a contingent weakness of nature, without really justifying the practice?

I reply, he not only permitted it, but he actually revealed it as an abiding and everlasting law of his kingdom. He himself, the Great Jehovah, commanded in the beginning, that men should marry and multiply; and he prescribed the penalty for violating a marriage contract. He joined men and women together through an appointed and consecrated order of men, and no man *could* take the honour and office of marrying a couple without his authority. The Lord has told us that He gave the wives of King Saul into David's bosom, to become the wives of David. Why did he so? Because Saul broke his commandment and became wicked, the Lord took the wives of Saul and gave them to David, whom Saul sought to kill. But David also, after a time, forgetting the strict mandates of God in regard to marrying and the everlasting shield of protection thrown around his neighbour's wife, took the wife of Uriah to his bosom without the approbation of God or his Prophet Nathan, and then

sought to cover his crime by blood-guiltiness. But God cursed him for it, and then took away *his* wives and gave them to another. He, in reproving David, told him that he would have given him more wives if he had asked him. Hereby we learn that God himself gives men many wives that are faithful and obedient, and takes them away from transgressors. If King Saul had been allowed to keep his many wives after death, he would still have the signal blessings of such good men as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Having shown that God has commanded marriage, and that He determines whether a man may have many wives or few, or none at all, I next proceed to show that the promise of God, of which so much is said in the Old and also in the New Testament, pre-eminently and emphatically pertains to the increase of the kingdom of God, to which there is no end. It pertains to the seed of the righteous. Don't startle, sir, at my position, but read and ponder well what I say, before you condemn it or allow yourself to condemn that which you have not examined. The Apostles of Jesus Christ said that those who had the faith of Abraham were heirs of the same promise. What, the Holy Apostles of Jesus Christ concerned in encouraging and countenancing plurality of wives? Awful! says one, I don't want to read or hear any more. But hold a moment. Do thyself no harm. Be patient and receive the truth, for truth is better than gold. And this is God's truth, of which the Holy Ghost will bear witness to you as well as me, if you will honestly receive his testimony; and my prayer is that you will not resist the Holy Ghost. The Apostles of Christ thought that a man or woman did pretty well, if they had the faith of Abraham, and obtained the same promise. Such persons would be very likely to get into the same heaven with Abraham. When God told Abraham that He would make of him a great nation through obedience, he believed it. But there was one thing Abraham did not believe, and could not believe. What is that? say you. He did not believe that he should ever become a great nation while he had no child. As good a man as he was, he would have staggered at such an idea. From the very day that God made a covenant with Abraham, Abraham became anxious concerning a posterity. Well, says one, this doctrine looks strange to me. It seems to have a carnal and fleshly bearing, and a spirit that looks mysterious to me. It is very different from what I have always been taught. I have been taught to believe that holiness and purity of heart, faith, hope, and charity, were the main things for Abraham or any other Saint to obtain, in order to get to heaven. And if I possess all these, I think that I shall do well enough if I never am married, or have any children at all. I have no doubt many an objector thinks as you do. But, sir, let me ask you—are you one of Abraham's children? Do you, in the end of your probation here, expect to go into Abraham's bosom and sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? even with those old and notorious polygamists? Well, says the objector, I really don't know what to think. I know that Paul says that we are heirs of the same promise Isaac was. And Isaac was a child of promise obtained by great faith and hope, obedience and mighty prayer on the part of his parents.

Was it really the great aim of Abraham, in walking before God and becoming perfect, to become the father of an innumerable posterity of righteous children, whereby he might reign over them as king and ruler under Christ for ever? Was this the heritage that God would give him? Was it for this that he anxiously prayed? Was this the blessing that God promised? Was this promise the blessing which all Abraham's children are to inherit through faith, and the thing which they are to seek after in whatever age of the world they may live? Yes, dear sir, this was the promise made to Abraham. The land of Canaan was the place for him and his seed after him. This land, however, would have been almost entirely valueless to Abraham if he had never had any children to possess it with him. Now, dear sir, I want you to understand that the promise made to Abraham, and to all that have the faith of Abraham, is the greatest promise that could be made to him, and one that contains the richest, purest, and most exalted blessings conceivable. Let no man for a moment attach the least idea of impurity, or of selfish carnality, to any promise made to Abraham, or any of God's covenant, law-abiding people. For the Holy One of Israel gives none but purely good gifts to faithful people. If you have thought that the promise of a great posterity to Abraham springing from his own loins, tended to sin-

ful lust, and expressed the same with a sneer, may God forgive you through speedy repentance and turning from the error of your ways. Be assured that the God of all the earth does not try men in the most rigid ordeal as he did Abraham, and then, after the most full and complete acceptance of his long scrutinized integrity and faith, proceed to make him a promise under all the sanctions of an oath and covenant, while that same promise is a mere trifle—a doubtful blessing. If tradition has led you to entertain any such notion, examine your views at once, and renounce your errors, lest they make the promises of God of none effect, and thereby destroy your soul.

I would here say, that the promise made to Abraham, and all who are heirs of the same promise through faith, extends to all generations in this life, and to all generations to come, for ever and ever. That is, Abraham and Sarah will continue to multiply, not only in this world, but in all worlds to come. And the same is true of all the sons and daughters that obtain a fulness of the promise made to Abraham.

Now, sir, take a little time, and look at the promise made to Abraham and Sarah, and see if it is not ample to satisfy the most exalted conceptions of any holy beings. For a moment, suppose it possible to sunder all social and family ties, then you will see man separate and distinct from every member of the family of his heavenly Father. What a spectacle of wretchedness and desolation!

Again, surround the father and mother with thousands of millions of fond and righteous children, then lop off one branch after another until all is gone. What is the result? Every blow that excinds a member from those fond parents opens a fountain of grief and sorrow inexpressible. Why? Because, the fondest hopes and richest joys of affection and inextinguishable love were there garnered up by the strong bonds of consanguinity and family relationship.

Are there any ties so endearing? so fruitful of happiness? Are there any so painful to be sundered? Hear the language of a father over the dead body of a departed son. Oh Absalom! my son, my son, would to God I had died for thee, my son! Have you followed the companion and wife of your youth, and the mother of your children, to the silent charnel-house of death? even there, you have felt an inexpressible draught upon the fountain of your bliss! No language could portray the deep anguish and grief of your soul on that occasion. With her, you had become one, even as one flesh. For her sake, you would have left the father that dandled you upon his knees, and whose noble brow had sweat in order to supply your early wants. For her sake, you would have left the maternal embrace of her that pillowed you upon her bosom with sweet kisses and honeyed epithets. You did not leave them because you loved the parents less; but you loved the wife more. By marriage you have now entered upon a higher law of affinity, and had thrown around you a stronger bond of affection, for the increase of bliss and the perpetuity of celestial ties. When that wife is laid low in death (for whose sake you might be willing to lay down your life, even as Christ laid down his life for the Church,) you feel an inexpressible pang of anguish which nothing but the resurrection can soothe or allay. And I do not mean the resurrection of a sister merely or of an immortal being. No, far from this. I mean the resurrection of the *wife*! the identical wife of your bosom; *that* will allay and soothe your anguish. You would not, you cannot, mourn the death of a female that is not your wife, as you would for a wife. Will the resurrection return you a mere female acquaintance that is not to be the wife of your bosom in eternity? No. God forbid. But it will restore you the wife of your bosom immortalized, who shall bear children from your own loins in all worlds to come, and that without pain or sorrow in travail. This, sir, was couched in the promise made to Abraham. This, makes the promise great. This, sir, strengthens, enhances, and immortalizes ties of the richest, sweetest texture. Companion and wife of my youth! Mother of my orphan children! Shall I then press you once more to my bereaved bosom, immortalized, beautified, and glorified! Ah, yes. Sweet hope! Glorious promise! Precious wedlock! Hallelujah to the God of Abraham, that has made such a covenant! He has renewed his covenant unto Isaac and Jacob, and through Paul, and all the Apostles, He has confirmed the same for an everlasting covenant in all generations.

The grave has no victory, death has lost its sting, through the new and everlasting

covenant made known to Abraham. Husbands and wives will be reunited. Parents and children will resume their place in the family order, and then will the mother that was once childless, (until God heard her prayer, and promised to make her a mother of nations,) rejoice unspeakably in receiving the filial affection of her loved ones. Do the son and daughter ever know how to appreciate their great obligations to their parents before they have had children of their own? No, by no means. Do the human family know how to appreciate their deep indebtedness to God their heavenly Father, before they themselves have filled the place of parents? No, never. If you could suppose a large society built up without family ties, you would find the essential ligaments and sinews of that society absolutely wanting. All that gives tune and harmony to the social compact is entirely absent. Take these ties away from any supposable social compact, and no government or social organization, I venture to say, could ever be perfected, or even maintain any more than a short-lived existence. Fallen angels that kept not their first estate are chained, by not being permitted to multiply lives; and from them came the doctrine of devils that forbid men to marry. A more effectual plan for destroying the happiness and stability of human society was never invented by the devil, than to forbid men to marry. If that plan were carried out, it would assimilate the condition of the human family to that of the fallen angels, as much as any one thing that we can conceive of. Do not startle, sir, if I should tell you that monogamy, or the one wife system, adopted throughout Christendom, is a very defective system. It does not answer the demands of society, and it is altogether inferior to the Patriarchal system of polygamy, as introduced by God himself. Debauchery and whoredoms are preeminently practised among Christian nations, where the former system is generally established by the law of the land. Heathen nations previous to their intercourse with Christian nations have been comparatively free from these abominable lusts. How awfully did the sons of Jacob avenge the abuse of their sister Dinah, upon the perpetrators of that debauchery. Yet their father, a mighty prophet of God, had taught them the propriety of having many wives.

One thing further. Sir, do not take offence if I prefer a serious charge against Christianity, touching this very thing. But hear it calmly, for Christianity must be weighed in the balances, with all her boasted institutions. Her supposed fine jewels, but rather meretricious ornaments, must be taken away. The time is at hand when that attire with which she has played the harlot, by forbidding marriage, or limiting it where God has not limited it, must be regarded as refuse silver. In the law of marriage, all Christendom has broken the new and everlasting covenant made with Abraham. In the fulfilment of that covenant, God gave Abraham many wives and concubines, and thereby expressed his designs how all the faithful seed of Abraham, in all generations and future worlds, should fulfil the command of Jehovah to multiply and replenish. But Christendom in the face and front of this covenant, has not only broken it, but by legal enactments, forbidden all men within the pale of her wide dominion, to keep or observe it. The established order of Patriarchs and Prophets, and the revealed will of heaven, have been set at nought.

The old way marks, that guided the brightest exemplars of obedience to heavenly mandates, from Abraham to John the revelator, have been most sacrilegiously trampled under foot. Remember, sir, that the covenant made with Abraham, was *everlasting*, and it also embraced all the righteous seed of like faith, not only through and during the Apostolic age, but in all ages of the world. But how can this covenant be fulfilled in Christendom? Now go forth from one side of Christendom to the other, from East to West, and from North to South, and tell me in what corner of Christendom, Abraham, or any like him, could dwell in peace with his wives and concubines? Or Elkanah and his wives? Or David, with his own wives, and the wives of King Saul, which God gave him? Or what king, even though he had the wisdom and integrity of Solomon, before his transgression, could live in security with his hundreds of wives? But I forbear to multiply examples and questions of this sort. The laws of Christian nations are an unmistakeable answer to these serious questions. These laws would inflict heavy penalties of distress and infamy upon such men. And these laws too are the laws of *Christian* nations. The Turk and the Heathen have never cast the first vote to enact these laws. Well, say Christendom, if we have

made such laws, and these laws are nothing less than a violation of the everlasting covenant made with Abraham and all his seed, what is the harm? Says one denomination of Christians, (and many others join with them in the defence,) I still think the laws are pretty good, and no one man should have more than *one* wife. Well Christian, you have a brazen front, not only to break the everlasting covenant, but also to go a step, yea, a long, bold stride further, by *justifying* the act. Now, Christian denominations, seeing you have joined together to justify yourselves, there is no other way than to bring you to a speedy trial for your obstinate defence of such laws as prevent the full development of the everlasting covenant. Now to the proof of your guilt. We will call in but one witness, whose testimony is in all cases conclusive and the end of all controversy. Well, let us hear who is this all-sufficient witness, that dares to confront all Christendom, and arraign the conduct of many great and devout nations. Well, the witness is no less than the God of Jacob, the King over all kings.

What does He say about transgressing the laws and breaking the covenant by which such men as Abraham were to become a multitude of people that could not be numbered by any figures that the ingenuity of man could invent or even conceive of? He says "the EARTH IS DEFILED! under the inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant; therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate." Here, sir, is the testimony of God as to what has been the result of breaking the marital laws and covenant. Almost universal defilement, prostitution, abortion, the natural affections turned out of their legitimate channel, and virtually extinguished, and men and women have become filled with jealousy, envy, and every abominable lust, and but for purposes of commerce and selfish gain, would hardly mingle together. More mischief and crime are traceable to the perversion and misunderstanding of the marriage rite than to any other ordinance ever instituted by men.

Domestic organization is the first and foremost foundation of all society, and of all government. And if the foundation be removed, what shall the righteous do? The righteous can neither preserve themselves from defilement nor others. Hence the whole earth is defiled. If I had the voice of a trumpet and the engine of superhuman power, I would penetrate the ears of all Christendom with a sense of this awful, defiling, desolating sin! I would at once call the attention of congress and parliament, and civil and ecclesiastic cabinets, to this one great foundation of society. I would show them that this is not only a foundation, but it is *the* foundation of society. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. Whatever superstructures are built upon any other foundation, will be attended with unspeakable defilement and desolation to all who build thereon. But, says one, I wish you would tell us distinctly what is the true and only foundation of all social order and government that shall bring mankind to the zenith of perfection and glory? and where shall I look to find it? Well, now listen, and hear attentively, and I will tell you unmistakably; or rather I will stand aside and let higher authority tell you. The Lord, yea, the Lord God shall tell you where to look. Therefore hear thou him. And what does He say? He says, look unto Abraham, your Father, the rock from whence ye were hewn, and unto Sarah, that bare you! There you have it, right from the Lord. Oh! Christendom. There you have it, all ye legislators and rulers! There it is, simple and plain; all ye reformers and philanthropists, just as it fell from the lips of our Maker.

Abraham is the rock—the father of the faithful! and Sarah is the mother and pattern for all women! She was the bright pattern of conjugal loyalty and faith for females, wives, and mothers, of all ages. When she had no child of her own, and she knew by revelation that her domestic bliss for time and all eternity was involved in becoming a mother; then, yes, then, she stepped forth and gave Hagar to her husband, for to be his wife, and a mother of his children. By that act the heart-strings of the wife were felt after, and stretched to their utmost power of endurance. She had given to her husband the beauty and joy of her youth—the captivating loveliness of female affections and unsullied virtue for scores of years, and now, God called upon her to divide or share her husband with another,—that husband, with whom her artless love and guileless confidence had been garnered up for

many years as safely (in her view) as in the pavilion of the Eternal Throne. She believed Abraham still, and while the deepest struggle that ever pervaded the bosom of innocence and loveliness was threatening her breast, victory declared in her favour, and salvation shone as glittering pearls in the coronet of Sarah, from that day. Heaven could not withhold from her the desire of her heart. An endless perpetuity of lives became hers. The hitherto desolate and barren could now smile at the reward of her triumph, and look prophetically forward upon the endless train of her offspring, surpassing the dust of the earth for number. Daughters of Israel! Look unto Sarah; her that bare you. If you suffer with her, you shall reign with her. Hear it! You shall be heirs of the same promise! Paul and all holy Apostles bear me witness that I speak the truth and lie not. A queen's coronet awaits you. With Rachael, Hannah, Elizabeth, and Mary, you shall swell the chorus of thanksgiving and holy rejoicings throughout all ages.

But to whom are the righteous sons of men to look? I answer, they are to look unto Abraham our father; he is our example and pattern. He is the rock that the gates of hell will not prevail against, as much as Peter was and obtained the testimony of God that He would *command* His children and His household before the Lord. But because men have not looked to the covenant made with him, and observed the laws thereof, and the ordinance thereof, the earth is defiled and the inhabitants cursed, and an universal desolation of men is speedily threatened. If the present order of things in Christendom is suffered to come to a legitimate issue, the time is at hand when few *men* will be left. But many *women* comparatively will be left. The strong ties of society are nearly all sundered. The marriage ties instituted by Christendom are a mere rope of sand. A few years will show that these ties are based merely upon the authority of man, and by no means founded upon the authority of God. When this fact is discovered, society will swing loose from its fastenings and former moorings, a miserable wreck in the swift wake of the dreadful cataract! Wars and abominations will spread over the earth, until it is empty and desolate.

Are there many in Christendom that attach any divine sanctions to Christian marriage? No, there are not. Tradition and education are the principal impediments against an unbridled and pernicious intercourse of the sexes. These impediments are almost entirely demolished in high places, whether civil or ecclesiastical. It is only a few sects of very limited numbers and influence, that suppose God has had any thing to do in solemnizing the marriage rite, as it is generally observed among Christian nations. One excellency of Abraham was, that he would never venture to take a wife, unless he obtained permission and revelation from the Lord to do so. When he acquired a wife, the favour was obtained of the Lord, as the lawful Giver of that wife. When he was united in marriage with any woman, it was God that joined them together, and no mere man had a right to put them asunder without permission from the same source. Abraham walked before God with a perfect heart. Isaac and Jacob did the same, and commanded their wives and children and households to do the same. Accordingly God fulfilled His promise, and multiplied them, and declared that He would abide in that covenant in all successive generations of them that kept His laws. But did they marry without first obtaining a revelation to do so from heaven? No, never! Had they ever married without divine permission and revelation, under divinely delegated hands, they would have been guilty of breaking the covenant and transgressing the laws of that covenant. If David had asked God for more wives, the Lord says that He would have given him such and such things. But he trusted in the authority of a king, entirely dispensing with any revelation from God: the result of his conduct was, that he became as one that had no wife at all. Yea, he broke the covenant, and changed the ordinance of marriage from divine permission to self-permission, and became desolate. He therefore, in consequence of that, became utterly desolate of wives or children for the world to come. The whole Jewish nation professed allegiance to God, yet Jesus denied their authority to multiply and increase—calling them an adulterous generation. They had substituted human permission and mere human authority to marry, in place of divine revelation; hence their connexion was adulterous, and their children being illegitimate, could not claim the promise pertaining to Abraham's seed. Now, God always kept a record of the lineage of Abraham's seed, and of necessity a record of their marriages. Con-

sequently an unlawful marriage would vitiate the connexion, and render the offspring illegitimate as to divine inheritance, and make void the promise of God to all such children, whether Jew or Christian. In the days of Ezra the Prophet, many persons sent in their request for a share in the office of the Priesthood; but though diligent search was made in all the records to discover their lineage and right to the same, yet as there was no record found, they were rejected; and thus it will be in the resurrection, with all those whose names and marriages are not found on record. And they that have wives will be as though they had none, and they that have children will be as though they had none. For all contracts and alliances that are not made according to the covenant and laws made in Abraham, will be null and void after this life, and of no more force or obligation whatever. Well, says a member of Christendom, if these things are so, I have been greatly deceived, and wish speedily to be set right; I truly love her whom I have been accustomed to call my wife, and I should not wish to be separated from her in the eternal world, nor from our dear children. Is it too late for me to make sure my title to her and our children? No, sir. Walk before God and be thou perfect, and thou shalt be an heir of Abraham, If you want your wife to all eternity, that which was said to David is applicable to you:—"If thou hadst asked, I would have given you." Objector, do you hear this which God says to David? "If thou hadst asked." But why should men ask God when they want to marry? The true answer is:—That they may get revelation and permission. Did Abraham always ask God when he wanted to get a wife? Most assuredly he did. Was this a part and condition of the everlasting covenant? It was. Was it a perpetual law of that covenant that no man should take a wife without the authority of revelation from God? It was. Was there any "*ordinance*" or ceremony of marriage necessary to be conformed to? Most assuredly. Could any man, without regard to his standing before God, administer this ordinance? *No! no!* by no means. He must be a man that walks before God with a perfect heart, in order that God can condescend to converse with him and reveal his mind to him.

Well, says the objector, might not men, even magistrates and rulers, so change the ordinance of marriage that they would not be obliged to ask God every time, and go to some Revelator or Prophet to solemnize the marriage? *No! no! Never! never!* The laws of this covenant are everlasting and unchangeable. David was a great king, and had as good a right to enact laws and institute ordinances of marriage, or abolish them, or change them, as any mere man whatever. But King David had no right, and he still smarts under the loss and damage he sustained by his temerity, when he neglected to "*ask*" God. Jesus Christ says, of David, "He has not ascended into heaven." Who does not know that if children are conceived in sin, or by an unlawful marriage of their parents, the taint of corruption and fornication will naturally cleave to them as a besetting predisposition to sin! This truth David acknowledged and deplored when he transgressed the laws and broke the everlasting covenant. There is, perhaps, no evil more pernicious to the human family than sexual defilement. This evil is moral, social, political, and spiritual. It affects the body, soul, and spirit of man, and extends its influence through time and throughout all eternity, except as it is arrested by the mighty hand of God. Some have attempted to stay the tide of prostitution, and purge society of gross debauchery and licentiousness; but their efforts are all in vain, though their motives may be humane and kind. First make the tree good, or lay the axe at the root thereof. The root of the evil lies in breaking the covenant of marriage as instituted with Abraham. Therefore the earth is defiled, and a curse rests upon the inhabitants.

Well, says one, if these things are true, and the ordinance of divine marriage is of such unspeakable consequence and importance, I wonder the New Testament does not say more about it. I reply, the New Testament says much about it. The New Testament gives more prominence to this ordinance, if possible, than the Old Testament. But wisdom is profitable in all things. If the Apostles had to do with a whole generation that were adulterous, and who had broken the laws and covenant made with Abraham, the Apostles would be likely to instruct the people first to walk before God perfectly, through faith, repentance, and baptism, even as the gospel was preached to Abraham. And when the people were brought to believe in the neces-

sity of a revelation from God, and were ready to subscribe to the conditions of that great promise made to Abraham, then would be sufficient time to show them through what ordinance, laws, and covenant, they could become the fathers of great nations and the mothers of great nations. John did at the very beginning lay the axe at the root, and told the whole nation of Jews—Abraham's posterity—to repent, and bring forth the fruits of Abraham, and do the works of Abraham, if they would become his children and heirs of the same great promise. How could they be an adulterous generation if they had walked in the footsteps of Abraham as to sexual connexion? Almost in the beginning of the New Testament history, Zacharias, the father of John, while speaking of the birth and name of his son, John the Baptist, represents the circumstance as a "remembrance" of the "promise" made to our fathers Abraham, &c., and also as a fulfilment of the oath and covenant made with Abraham. His words are as follow:—"To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which he swore to our father Abraham."

Now Zacharias was a Prophet well versed in the knowledge of the true nature of the "promise" made to Abraham, and the "oath and covenant." He knew that the "promise" and "covenant" had special reference to posterity, or an innumerable offspring. He knew, too, that he could not have the blessings of that "covenant," neither could he be an "heir" of the same "promise," without children. But Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth were old and had no children. Now they had the same concern about posterity that Abraham and Sarah had, and also that Jacob and Rachael had, and likewise that Elkanah and Hannah had. Their prayer went up to God continually. "Lord let me be partaker of the 'promise' made to Abraham, and of the blessings of the same 'covenant.'" But though Zacharias was a very good man, and his wife a very good woman, his faith was not quite as strong as Abraham's. He prayed mightily for a son, but when an angel came and made him the same "promise" in his old age, that was made to Abraham, his faith wavered, while Abraham staggered not at the "promise." But when the "*promise*" was fulfilled, he acknowledged with great joy and thankfulness that God was true to His "promise" and "covenant" made with Abraham and the fathers. Now, who does not see that God was determined to fulfil this "covenant" and "promise" with all the faithful seed of Abraham in every generation of them that keep his laws. Neither age nor barrenness, nor any other obstacle, should prevent the faithful from inheriting the "promise." And Mary, too, the mother of Jesus, gives her testimony to the same effect, and in support of the same "covenant" and "promise." She was a virgin and unmarried, yet full of faith. Her testimony is, "He hath holpen his servant Israel in remembrance of His mercy, as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever." Now, if persons in those days understood the nature and perpetuity of the "covenant" with Abraham, as well as Mary did, they never would ask if the New Testament said much relating to posterity, and consequently to the "covenant" and ordinance and laws regulating the ordinance by which that posterity is to be propagated and made lawful "heirs" of the promises. In the 7th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, while speaking of the Hebrews in Egypt, the writer says, in these words—"When the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people *grew and multiplied* in Egypt." Now, whoever reads this history alluded to by Luke, will discover a most remarkable *fruitfulness and increase* of that people, perhaps unequalled by any other people in the records of time. In the short period of four hundred and thirty-two years, an increase from 72 persons to probably near 3,000,000, exclusive of deaths. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, alarmed at their increase, says that they had become more numerous than the Egyptians, and hence they resorted to cruel oppression in order to check their *growth*. The Abrahamic system of plurality was hereby demonstrated to give Israel a great advantage over others. The Egyptians could not defeat the purpose of God, and His "oath" and "promise" to Abraham concerning this *increase*. Neither can men frustrate His purpose and "promise" to Abraham concerning the Latter-day Saints, the seed of Abraham, in which he has resolved to *increase and multiply* them exceedingly, because the *time* of the promise has fully come, in which He will make the seed of Abraham of this day and age to *multiply* and become a great nation. Let the nations of the earth renew the ancient cruelties if possible, and slay all our male

children, and enact laws against a plurality of wives, and they will find themselves engaged in a warfare against the God of Jacob. And they will find themselves thwarted and entirely foiled, in all such wicked purposes. God will fulfil His promise to all His children in every generation.

Jesus has promised, that if any man hath left father and mother, wife and children, &c., for his sake and the Gospel's, he shall have an hundred fold in this time, and in the world to come life everlasting. No one should doubt this "promise." It will be fulfilled unto the uttermost.

Why was the law instituted, that when a man died, his brother (who might be supposed already to have a wife,) was required to take his widow and raise up children unto the deceased? What advantage could the deceased derive from the increase of his children after his death? We answer, none; unless the deceased could come into possession of those children in eternity, and they become a part of the nation over whom he is to preside.

This is the Bible truth of the matter. The increase of the righteous is aided and guarded by divine laws, not only in this world, but out of the world also. A righteous man's rights are secured to him by the Almighty, before he dies, and after his death. And the dearest and most sacred rights which a man has, and the richest treasures which he can possess, either in time or eternity, are vested in his family, as we have previously shown. Men's wives and children are dearer—far dearer, and infinitely more valuable than their houses and lands. But God secures to his covenant people, not only their lands, but their wives and their children. Although Abraham has not yet got possession of the land of Canaan, yet he is sure to possess it, with his family. He loved his wives, and would have died for them, as every righteous man should be willing to do. And if men do not appreciate the family ties, even as Abraham did, they are not worthy to enjoy them, and deserve to be ranked and classed off with those who are "without natural affection, covenant-breakers, backbiters, disobedient to parents, haters of God." They hate God, because the things that God loves, they hate; and the persons that God loves, they hate. God loved Abraham, and loved the family order and the domestic relations which Abraham instituted. And He loved David and Solomon, so far as they carried out and observed the same order. Men who hate the pure and righteous family order instituted by Abraham, Jacob, and all the Prophets, will also hate God. Why? Because He is the lover and friend of the same order. Yea, He is the sole founder and determined supporter of that very order. And any warfare against that order is a warfare against God. And there is no better mark of infallible enmity to God than to see a man opposing the order of God knowingly. It is a sure evidence that such a man has not the faith which Abraham or Zacharias possessed, and that he is not a fit subject to join Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of God, either in this world or the next. Abraham's faith led him to value this very same domestic order and privilege, more than his country, or houses and lands, or even his life. He never would be contented till he obtained a promise from God, that he should have this very thing that I am talking about. And when a man undervalues this "promise," he not only shows himself to be destitute of saving faith, but also destitute of the essential germ of natural affection, to that degree that he is very liable to become a *scoffer* and *mock*er of the "last days," "speaking evil" of such "dignities" as Abraham and Brigham, and all other illustrious Prophets and sons of God. He is very likely to represent the "grace" of God to be "lasciviousness." He is very likely to consider the "promise" made to Abraham, which all holy men and women prized as grace and favour, to be no favour, but rather a system of carnal abomination; and to sneer at it as such. Thereby he seeks to uproot and demolish the very foundation laid by Prophets and Apostles. And women, too, that knowingly undervalue this "promise" and Patriarchal order, do most alarmingly manifest symptoms of being without natural affection, and destitute of the faith and righteousness of holy women of old, and insensible to the blessing of becoming mothers of nations, and wearing the coronet of Sarah, Rachael, Hannah, Elizabeth, and Mary. They have forgotten the natural use of women, as revealed from heaven, and become despisers of thrones, and dominions, and principalities, and powers. Yet we hope better things of the righteous, though we thus speak, and things that accompany salvation.

But, says the objector, though I admit that many parts of the New Testament favour your views, beyond what I had ever supposed, yet I do not see how Paul's views can harmonize with yours. I reply: Paul was an unquestionable advocate of the "faith," and "promise," and "covenant" of Abraham, and of the necessity of our heirship to the same "promise." Well, well, I admit that; but was he an advocate of marriage? I reply, yes; Paul was a firm advocate of marriage. The notion that marriage was not very necessary, and that men should be limited and forbidden to marry more than one wife, or even any wife at all, was being introduced in his day. And this anti-Christian notion was threatening to break the covenant, and kill off the Apostles and bring in a most damnable heresy. Paul boldly calls "forbidding to marry" a doctrine of devils. The devil not being allowed to have a body, or to marry, and the children of this wicked one not being allowed to have a body for one thousand years after death, or to marry in that time, it is very befitting the devil's ethics to forbid Abraham's seed to marry. If he should succeed in this prevention of marriage, he would make the promise to Abraham null and void, and God a liar, and demolish the whole plan of salvation, and defile the whole earth. Hence there is no one thing named within the lids of the Bible to which the devil is more opposed than to the Patriarchal system of marriage. He would probably offer a higher bounty to any Pharisee, or other person, to come into his service, in opposition to that system, than for any other campaign, whatever. If he could not break up that system, his next best move would be to kill off Abraham's seed, and the advocates of the system. Hence the devil sought to have Esau kill Jacob, a child of "promise;" and the Egyptians sought to kill Moses and the male children of the Hebrews; and Herod and the Jews sought to kill Christ, the promised seed. And, if I mistake not the spirit of prophecy, he will again wage a bloody war against this system, and all who believe in the same system and "promise."

Well, what more did Paul say, besides calling anti-marriage the devil's doctrine? Why, he goes straight forward and insists that the officers of the Apostolic Church should absolutely and positively marry. Apollos and Cephas knew their duty well enough to have a sister or wife along with them; and it was not Paul's prerogative to direct them, who were Apostles like himself; but he had a right, as an Apostle, to instruct inferior officers, Elders, Bishops, and Deacons. Accordingly he does direct that they, each of them shall have, at least, *one* wife. Well, says one, I did not think that Paul would be so contaminated as to teach any such thing, after saying so much as he has about faith in the "promise" and "covenant" of Abraham and the fathers. But where do you find it? Read his Epistle to Titus, and that tells you how he instructed Titus "to ordain Elders in every church, *if* they were blameless, and the husband of *one* wife." It seems from this, that Paul did not consider that an Elder was a fit subject for ordination to the Holy Priesthood, unless he had, at *least*, *one* wife. And if any one will read Paul's writings, they will discover that he also positively requires that a "Bishop," which is another order of the Priesthood, should be the husband of, at *least*, *one* wife also. And even a "Deacon," who possesses the smallest measure of the Priesthood, is most emphatically required to have *one* wife.

Now, the conclusion of the whole matter from Paul's writings is, that every order and degree of Priesthood, from Apostles to Deacons, had more or less wives. If Paul was an exception among Apostles, (which I do not for a moment admit,) it must have been for some peculiar reasons, which I will not now explain.

The subject of plurality had come in a regular succession of Patriarchal practice, down to the Apostolic age; and it was only when somebody possessed of a wicked, ignorant spirit, forbid it, or sought to be superstitiously righteous above what was written, that Paul noticed it, which he did by denouncing its prohibition most unsparingly as a doctrine of devils. On the other hand, Paul sustains the first great command of God, given in the garden—to *multiply*; and entering into the spirit of the Patriarchal order, and the spirit of God, he shows that a woman is a richer prize and blessing to a man than any thing else. He shows what she is created for, and who she is created for. He shows that a man could not even be in *Christ*, in the fullest sense, without being united to a woman. But, says one, how does Paul show all this? Your assertions would convey the idea that Paul was thoroughly grounded in the faith of Abraham as to the great "promise." Where do you find so much proof?

Read his own words for yourself. Here they follow : "The woman is the glory of the man." Take woman from man, and you take away the best thing of which he can boast : you take away his crown and his glory. Again, "the woman is created for the man." The "what for," and the "who for," needs no explanation. Again, "let the younger women marry, guide the house, and bear children." "Marriage is honourable in all, but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

Well, say you, I am partly constrained to feel satisfied that all the New Testament writers fully agree with you, as to the divine authority and perpetuity of the Patriarchal system of marriage, and increase of their posterity ; but I want one more additional proof in favour of the system, before every relic of doubt can be swept from my mind. I want you to show me distinctly, that Christ Jesus was ever married, or ever had a wife, or that he ever will be married and have a wife. If you can satisfy my curiosity on this one remaining point, then I will forbear. Well, this makes me think of a similar question dictated by the Holy Ghost 1800 years ago. The question was this : "Who shall declare *his* generation?" Now, sir, if you can believe an angel from heaven, and the light of human eyes on this point, you will not need much of my testimony to confirm it. A certain angel spoken of in the Revelation of St. John, willing to gratify curiosity upon this same interesting subject, says to one, 'Come hither, and I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife.' Now, if that angel tells truth, he shewed this interesting personage the Bride, the Lamb's wife, to the inquisitive person who wanted to know about the wife of Christ. Again, John the Revelator, says most distinctly, that the Lamb's *wife* hath made herself ready, and blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now, if the Lord has in very deed shown unto men in the flesh, the very Bride, and *wife* of Christ, and also the *nuptial* celebration, then an honest mind may be at rest upon this subject. The first miracle that Jesus wrought, was used to grace a nuptial celebration. And sir, God claims to be the Father of the human family, that is, of our spirits ; and so far as the body of Jesus our elder brother is concerned, He is his Father in the flesh. He made a covenant with Jesus Christ, our eldest brother, that his family, after whom all heaven is named, should increase without end. The same was repeated to Abraham, and all that are Christ's, down to the last person that shall ever be born. The last child of Christ that is born, whether in the Millennium or final consummation and end of all things, will claim this "promise" of endless increase.

Well, before I close my queries, one thing more. Are not those awful and multiplied denunciations contained in the Scriptures, against adultery, fornication, Babylon, mother of abominations, whore of all the earth, spoken against spiritual wickedness, instead of sexual and bodily lusts and transgressions of the covenant with Abraham ? I reply, these were spoken against actual deeds of sexual defilement in the flesh. Men are not judged on the score of spiritualities, but they are judged for the *deeds* done in the body. The whole earth is defiled by actual transgression. This general defilement has arisen from breaking the "*covenant*," transgressing the *laws*, and changing the *ordinance* of marriage from divine permission to the shallow authority of magistrates and unordained priests. The grand design of God in bringing the spirits of men and women to occupy bodies upon this earth was, in order to establish a system of perfect Patriarchal government, according to the pattern of the family of Heaven. That portion of our universal family which transgressed and warred in heaven, were indeed permitted to come to this same earth with the rest of the human family. But when the spirits that kept their first estate were allowed to take bodies, the disobedient were denied this privilege. And those who kept not the "*covenant*" and laws of this second estate, as revealed to Abraham, and all who are Christ's, will not be allowed to re-take their bodies after death on a level with the obedient. The heirs of the Abrahamic "*promise*" will re-take their bodies, and resume the family relationship, just as they are on the earth : husbands and wives, parents and children ; incorruptible and immortal, however. But where will those be who are not heirs of the "*promise*" ? They will be kept back, because they kept not their second estate, for the long and dark period of a thousand years, without those bodies which they refused to subject to the law of Christ and Abraham. What a long, dreary dissolution of family ties — of husbands and wives, parents and children ! But I forbear. Blessed are the faithful who keep His commandments, and have right to the tree of life, and who are

not written childless in the earth, and their names blotted out of remembrance; but are as the willows planted by the water courses, and as a handful of corn whose fruit shall shake as the cedars of Lebanon.

Similar chains and imprisonment await those who abide not the laws pertaining to this second estate. Their bodies will be withheld from them, and their advancement in knowledge and power during an appointed time, must measurably cease. He who holds the keys of resurrection and endless lives, will say to them, "Wait till I bid you come forth. The marriage feast is indeed ready, but you are not invited guests just now. Wait till I call for you."

SUMMARY.

Was the law of increase, originally applicable to all living existences upon the face of the earth?—It was.

Were all the beasts required to observe this law?—They were.

Were all the fowls of the air subject to the same law?—Yes.

Were all the fish in subordination to the same law of increase?—Yes.

Were all vegetables subject to the same law of multiplying according to their kind, having seed in themselves for that purpose?—Yes.

Were Adam and Eve placed under the same law and positive injunction.—Yes.

Where do you find proof for all this?—In the first part of the Book of Genesis.

Is there any institution or ordinance necessarily connected with the lawful propagation of the human family? if so, what is it?—Yes: marriage.

What proof?—Marriage is honourable in all. If they cannot contain, let them marry.

Is this ordinance for mankind in their mortal state only, or for their immortal and eternal state also?—For both.

Is there any proof that it is for men in their immortal and eternal state?—Yes: it was given to Adam and Eve before the transgression, while they were immortal.

Had the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Elders, Bishops, and Deacons, wives?—Yes.

Did they get them from the Lord?—Yes. Proof: Whoso getteth a wife, getteth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord. From Him cometh every good gift.

Is a wife obtained lawfully in any other way than through revelation by a prophet?—No. Proof: He will do nothing except he reveal his secrets to his servants the prophets. The Lord testifies that he gave wives into the bosom of David.

Did Jesus Christ have a wife in his resurrected state?—Yes. John writing upon this subject, after the resurrection of Jesus, testifies to the fact of the bride, and wife, and marriage supper of Christ.

Had Jesus Christ any children, or will he have?—Yes; Isaiah says, he shall see his seed.

Had the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ a wife?—Yes.

Who was she?—Mary; and blessed above all women, and highly favoured of the Lord.

Had he any children by her in the flesh?—One Only-Begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

Had the Father of Jesus Christ any other children?—Yes; an innumerable multitude.

Who are they?—We, the whole human family, and also the fallen angels, are his offspring. He is the Father of our spirits, and Jesus is our oldest Brother among the Spirits.

Will men that are united to their wives for all eternity, by proper authority here on earth, have their claim ratified throughout all eternity without fail?—Yes: whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth shalt be bound in heaven.

What is the greatest *blessing*, in time and all eternity, ever promised or bestowed upon man or woman?—An endless perpetuity and multiplicity of lives, found in the way of righteousness and truth.

What is the greatest curse ever bestowed upon man or woman?—The absence or loss of the greatest blessing. The opposite of eternal life, is death, or the extinction and cessation of the increase of lives eternally. Once let the fruitfulness and increase of the animal and vegetable world cease, and the glory of the animal and ve-

gettable creation falls to nought; the principle of unfolding progressive improvement ceases speedily. Let the fruitfulness and increase of the human family cease, and the same principle of unfolding progressive improvement ceases. Hence, that portion of the family of spirits that kept not their first estate, by not being permitted to take bodies here upon the earth, were chained in darkness thereby, against progress in power and intelligence, until the judgment of the great day.

Is it the sole prerogative of God to appoint men to officiate in the ceremony of marriage?—Yes.

What has been the consequence when men have *assumed* the right to administer the marriage rite, without observing the Patriarchal rule of immediate revelation?—The whole earth has been defiled. Adultery, fornication, infanticide, and the degeneracy of the human species, have followed this wicked invention.

Will there ever be a pure, healthy race of human beings, distinguished for their longevity and expansive intelligence, where this human invention is substituted for divine authority?—No, never. The earth is devoured with a curse.

If there is an equal number of males and females, and some men have many wives, will not some other men be comparatively short?—Very possible.

Will this deficiency with some men be just and impartial?—Most assuredly it will. (See proof in the examples of Saul and David.) Rewards are given to good men, and penalties to bad men, without any imputation of partiality or injustice. The man that robbed his neighbour of one wife was obliged to forfeit more than fourfold the number of his own wives; and the king that trampled divine commandments under his feet was dispossessed of all he had.

Will this method of distributing the gifts of God account for the necessity of a plurality of wives?—It will.

Are not females generally as corrupt and wicked as males, and therefore deserve to be equally yoked in pairs—wicked men with wicked women?—No. Females are not generally as wicked as males.

Why?—Because there is not meted out to them the same privilege and high responsibility. Man being the head of the woman, holds the chair of State and of Church. He enacts laws without the concurrence of the woman, and holds all the influential offices of society. Consequently, if society is corrupt, he is primarily and chiefly responsible for it, and not the woman. She does her duty in submitting to *his* will, until a higher power, even that of God, commands her to do otherwise. Hence the abominations of women are measurably rolled back upon the heads of corrupt men in the economy of Jehovah.

May we therefore infer from this that more women than men will probably be saved?—Yes. Hence some men must have more than one, seeing that neither sex can be in Christ without the other.

What? cannot a man be in Christ, even in the fullest sense of beatitude, without being the lawful husband of a wife?—No. Because Christ has said so, not only in the New Testament, but the promise to Abraham of innumerable lives, implies it.

Have men ever been called to forsake and lose their wives for the Gospel's sake?—Yes.

Is there any instance of the kind recorded in the Scriptures?—Yes. Lot was obliged to both leave and lose his wife, through her reluctance to go with him to a place of safety, and through her ungodly sympathy with persons that she was leaving behind.

What reward have men who have faith to forsake their rebellious and unbelieving wives in order to obey the commandments of God?—An hundred fold of wives in this world, and eternal lives in the next.

Respectfully Yours, &c.,

Liverpool, England, January 13th, 1853.

ORSON SPENCER.

LIVERPOOL:

S. W. RICHARDS, 15, WILTON STREET.

